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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, September 2013 will mark the 50th anniversary of former Beatle George Harrison's visit to Benton and Southern Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, The visit occurred just 5 months before the Beatles' first performance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" and the rise of Beatlemania; at the time of his visit, the Beatles were not known in the United States; and

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WHEREAS, George Harrison's visit to Southern Illinois occurred as a result of his sister living in Benton with her husband, an engineer with the Freeman Coal Company in West Frankfort; the visit served as an opportunity for George Harrison to get away from the fame and fanfare that the Beatles were already experiencing in England; their song, "She Loves You", was the #1 song in England during the week he arrived in America; and

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WHEREAS, What makes George Harrison's trip so significant for Beatle historians is that there were several firsts that occurred just prior to and during his visit to Southern Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, During the early summer of 1963, George Harrison's

1 sister Louise was trying to promote the Beatles in this country
2 by having local radio stations play the English group's songs;
3 the first radio station in the United States to do so was WFRX
4 in West Frankfort, and the first song the DJ, Marcia Schafer
5 Raubach, played was "From Me To You"; when he visited the area,
6 one of the first things he wanted to do was to thank Marcia and
7 visit the station, where she interviewed him; this was the
8 first time any Beatle was interviewed in the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, George Harrison also played music with a local
10 group, the Four Vests, during his visit at 2 locations, the
11 Eldorado VFW and the Bocce Ball Club in Benton; and

12 WHEREAS, Another interesting event that happened during
13 George Harrison's visit was his purchase of a new guitar at a
14 Southern Illinois music store; Gabe McCarty took him to the
15 Fenton Music Store in Mt. Vernon, where he bought a
16 Rickenbacher 425 and later used it to play with the Beatles;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, The home where Louise Harrison lived during her
19 famous brother's visit in 1963 was scheduled to be demolished
20 during the mid-1990s to make way for a parking lot for the
21 local Illinois Department of Mines and Minerals office;
22 however, a group of interested individuals, including Louise,
23 later persuaded the State to spare it; later, the home, located

1 at 113 McCann Street, became a bed and breakfast owned by Jim
2 and Daryl Chady and Cornelius and Dorothy Schultz; and

3 WHEREAS, George Harrison passed away on November 29, 2001,
4 after a long bout with cancer; a memorial service was held at
5 the home; and

6 WHEREAS, The Illinois State Historical Society will
7 dedicate a memorial plaque at Capitol Park in downtown Benton
8 at 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, September 21, 2013, honoring the 50th
9 anniversary of George Harrison's historic visit; therefore, be
10 it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
12 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
13 we recognize the 50th anniversary of former Beatle George
14 Harrison's visit to Southern Illinois; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
16 presented to Louise Harrison, Gabe McCarty, Marcia Schafer
17 Raubach, and the City of Benton as an expression of our respect
18 and esteem.